

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR
WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON
WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

□ 1530

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The Chair will now entertain one-minute requests.

TRIBUTE TO BILL POWELL, A MIDDLE GEORGIA LEGEND

(Mr. CHAMBLISS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a middle Georgia legend, Bill Powell, who will close out 40-plus years of service during tonight's 6:00 newscast on WMAZ TV in Macon, Georgia.

Upon his arrival in Macon on WMAZ radio in 1958, Bill quickly became one of the community's most popular radio personalities, and it was only natural when Bill leaped into television weather at WMAZ in 1982 that he soon became one of central Georgia's best and most popular television personalities.

Bill has given of his time to speak to local schools and community organizations concerning various weather topics. He has served with distinction on a number of boards within central Georgia, such as the Museum of Aviation, the Middle Georgia Air Force Association, and the South Side Lions Club.

As Bill retires, he will take his sense of humor and fun-loving personality, but will leave a legacy of community service that will be difficult to surpass.

Congratulations, Bill, on a job well done. As you told your listeners for so many years, keep on keeping on. God bless you, Bill.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mrs. LINDA SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CONYERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE THE PROBLEM OF RISING PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, recently I introduced legislation to create a commission that will report to the Congress on the problem of rising prescription drug prices. The commission will do much needed research into how we can change public policy to ensure the affordability of prescription drugs.

Prescription drugs are the highest out-of-pocket expenses for three out of four elderly patients. Recent price increases for generic pharmaceuticals have been as severe as 4,000 percent. One thousand tablets of Chlorpropamide, a medication that is necessary to sustain life for diabetics, has gone from \$19.45 to \$306.66 this year.

All other segments of the health care industry have contributed greatly to bringing down health care costs. Since 1980, the cost of pharmaceuticals have risen over 2½ times the rate of inflation. Everyone is affected by these increases through insurance costs, government reimbursements, not just the uninsured.

Considering the Federal Government's and taxpayers' rather large public investment in the pharmaceutical industry through the form of tax incentives, tax write-offs, and grants, some discipline in making responsible pricing decisions should be expected.

The industry had over \$6 billion in annual deductions for promotional activity before the FDA recently decided to relax direct marketing restrictions. This commission will lay a foundation on which to build policy that keeps prescription drugs reasonably priced.

The commission will look into why American consumers are paying much more than those in other countries, why increases are out of line with inflation of other goods. It is time for the Congress to act responsibly and ensure that corporate greed does not get in the way of our seniors having affordable health care.

This legislation is fair and evenhanded, and something our senior citizens and the public deserve. I encourage Members to support this bill.

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the special order time of the gentleman from California (Mr. RIGGS).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

AMERICA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH MEXICO IN THE WAR AGAINST DRUGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House again this afternoon to talk about the subject of the problem of illegal narcotics, and in particular this afternoon, to address the problem relating to our relations with Mexico and Mexico's effort in our war on drugs.

As Members may recall, the Clinton administration certified Mexico recently as cooperating in our war on drugs. I really want to call to the House's attention the current situation with Mexico, which is reaching disastrous proportions. Just today there is information that our United States agents are warned of Mexican retaliation as a result of their participation in a sting operation in Mexico.

I have followed this effort of the United States to take action in Mexico in a money laundering and illegal narcotics operation within the confines of Mexico. I pulled up some of the headlines, which are quite revealing.

This one is the week of May 20. It says, "Reno Lauds Mexico for Help with Probe. Customs Targeting Drug Money Bankers."

In this sting operation the Attorney General said, "Law enforcement officials in Mexico have promised to cooperate in a massive U.S. Customs Service money laundering investigation aimed at Mexico banks."

Then we see another headline a few days later, "Mexico Promises Probe of Bankers Indicted for Laundering." This is the headline on May 20; again, cooperation.

Then we find a sudden turn of events, that in fact Mexico is not cooperating. The headlines from the Washington Post on May 23 say "Zedillo," the Mexican President, "Blasts U.S. Undercover Drug Sting." He condemned the use of U.S. agents in that operation.

Then we saw an apology in another headline, "Clinton Regrets Keeping Sting Secret."

Then we find out that the sting was not secret, that in fact the Mexicans knew about it and were told about it in advance. The Wall Street Journal reports, "Bank Bust Stings U.S.-Mexico Relations."

The latest in today's newspaper, as I said when I began, is "U.S. Agents Warned of Mexican Retaliation."

Mr. Speaker, this is the country we certified as cooperating. This is the country that the Attorney General praised for cooperating in this sting.

This is what is reported in today's paper: "The United States Drug Enforcement Administration has pulled its agents out of Tijuana, and the Justice Department is warning American

lawmen on both sides of the 2,000-mile long Mexican border to protect themselves more than ever. The new threat they face is not violence from narcotics traffickers, but hostility from their law enforcement counterparts in the Mexican Federal judicial police."

This is an incredible state of affairs. Here we have incredible amounts of drugs coming in from Mexico. Nearly 50 percent of all the hard drugs in the United States reaching our cities and our streets, our communities and our schools and our children, is coming in from Mexico, and a policy totally in disarray.

This is a matter that requires the investigation and oversight of this Congress, the attention of this administration, and should be investigated to its fullest, to find out what is really going on between the United States and Mexico in the war on drugs.

Are our agents now under attack? Are our agents going to be expelled? What is this administration doing about the country that we have helped, we have loaned money to, we have made a trading partner, and then now they are condemning us and not cooperating in this effort to bring corruption, to bring drug trafficking, to a halt on both sides of the border?

KOSOVA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, for the last several weeks the world has watched in horror as innocent civilians, men, women, and children, have been slaughtered in the province of Kosova in Europe. Forty thousand people are now fleeing their homes, are now refugees.

Kosova is a province of 2 million people, 90 percent of whom are ethnic Albanian, controlled totally and dominated by the Serbs, living under tremendous oppression. Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic uncorked ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, and here it is happening again in Kosova.

The people of Kosova, the Albanians, have no rights. They have no political rights, no civil rights, no economic rights. They are truly a people under oppression. Unemployment is 80 percent. They have tried for years peaceful resistance. It has not worked. Now their plight is worse than ever. The tens of thousands of Serb troops in Kosova have fired the opening shots, Mr. Speaker, in a renewed campaign of ethnic cleansing.

I have warned for years that Kosova was a powderkeg. Unless the U.S. and the international community intervene now to ward off a catastrophe, Milosevic will carry out there what he did in Bosnia, a horrific campaign of ethnic cleansing and genocide. Two hundred thousand people died in Bosnia. It could be worse in Kosova if we let it happen.

Thankfully, President Clinton reaffirmed last week during his meeting

with Abraham Rugova, President of the Republic of Kosova, that the U.S. would not permit what happened in Bosnia to recur in Kosova. President Clinton was right.

But the time, Mr. Speaker, has come to put our money where our mouth is. The ethnic cleansing has begun. The burning of villages has begun. The expulsion of tens of thousands of ethnic Albanians has begun. The halting of humanitarian convoys has begun. All of this is how it started in Bosnia. The United States must now act.

In December, 1992, President Bush warned Serb strongman Milosevic that if he vastly increased the military repression in Kosova, the U.S. would respond in kind. This threat, known as the Christmas warning, formed the basis of U.S. foreign policy in the region. President Clinton reiterated the Christmas warning when he entered office. Time and time again State Department officials have noted that U.S. policy has not changed.

Today I say the Christmas warning has been triggered. To live up to our pledge to the people of Kosova and maintain our credibility in the region by meeting this solemnly pledged commitment, it is time we act.

Here is what we must do. We must strike with NATO air strikes. Today Serbian tanks and artillery are leveling villages, setting houses ablaze, and slaughtering innocent civilians. We should now utilize our assets in the region by destroying these weapons of war in the field and as they sit in their staging compounds.

We must declare a no-fly zone over Kosova. Serbian attack helicopters have been used against innocent civilians. This must stop. Furthermore, fighter aircraft have been moved into Kosova. American aircraft in the region must halt any of these flights.

We must reimpose the investment ban on Serbia. Milosevic's only access to hard currency has been through international investment. Unless serious progress is made to resolve the Kosova crisis, no additional international investment should be permitted. The outer wall of sanctions on Serbia ought to be maintained, and we ought to reimpose the inner wall of sanctions.

We ought to utilize the war crimes tribunal. Milosevic and his henchmen should be fully accountable for their actions in Kosova, and should be prosecuted for any war crimes they commit. We need to get international monitors back in Kosova. In July of 1993 Milosevic spelled OSCE monitors from Kosova. Now more than ever they must return so they can report to the world on the brutality now being committed, and to prevent further acts of atrocity from being committed.

On Wednesday, the Washington Post ran an editorial which I believe accurately captured the Kosova crisis, and what U.S. policy should be in response. The editorial said, "Sanctions are in any case mostly beside the point. Only

the credible threat of force and the use of force, if necessary, can deter Mr. Milosevic. The U.S. can intervene now, as it has said it would, or, as in Bosnia, it can be forced to intervene later, after much damage has been done and any solution is far more difficult."

□ 1545

Mr. Speaker, along with 25 of my colleagues, I am sending a letter to the President making these recommendations. Two months ago we requested a meeting with the President to discuss Kosova. Today we look forward to hearing from the White House when that meeting will be scheduled.

The genocide and ethnic cleansing in Kosova must stop and only we and NATO can stop it. The time for diplomatic niceties is over. We must act now.

Mr. Speaker, I submit the following for the Record:

[From The Washington Post, June 3, 1998]

EMPTY THREATS

The Clinton administration has said time and again that it won't permit Serb leader Slobodan Milosevic to extend his brutal ethnic-cleansing tactics to the independence-minded province of Kosovo. Now Mr. Milosevic's troops are conducting precisely such atrocities in Kosovo, and the administration's response so far: more talk.

Kosovo is part of Serbia, which in turn is part of what's left of Yugoslavia. But only 10 percent of Kosovo's 2 million people are ethnic Serbs; 90 percent are ethnic Albanians. For a quarter of a century, the province enjoyed considerable autonomy, but Mr. Milosevic revoked that in 1989 to fuel his nationalist rise to power. Ever since, and under the lash of Serb repression, a Kosovo independence movement has gained strength. The movement has been largely nonviolent. But recently, as ethnic Albanians have become convinced that the West has abandoned them, an armed resistance has rapidly gained support.

U.S. policy on all this has been pretty clear—at least in words. The United States doesn't support Kosovo independence, but it does support legitimate aspirations for more autonomy. It favors peaceful dialogue and opposes armed conflict. President Bush warned in 1992 that the United States would use force if necessary to block ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. The Clinton administration embraced that warning in 1993. And as recently as three months ago, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said the United States would not "stand by and watch the Serbian authorities do in Kosovo what they can no longer get away with doing in Bosnia."

But that's just what Serbian authorities are doing right now. In a wide swath of borderland along Albania, Serb police and soldiers have been destroying villages, killing civilians and turning thousands of men, women and children into refugees. An Austrian defense attaché who spent two days touring the isolated region said, "All the signs are that the Serbs are going on with ethnic cleansing in the Kosovo area."

U.S. policy in the past three months has been a confusing mixture of sanctions threatened, imposed and withdrawn. Such sanctions are in any case mostly beside the point; only the credible threat of force, and the use of force if necessary, can deter Mr. Milosevic. The United States can intervene now, as it has said it would. Or, as in Bosnia, it can be forced to intervene later, after much damage has been done and any solution is far more difficult.